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## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



*[The Editor is not responsible for opinions expressed in this Department.]*

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DEAR EDITOR: I wonder why it is that more good nurses are not willing to take head-nurse positions in hospital wards? I am inclined to think a good deal of it is that nurses estimate the salaries given in these positions as too small to make it worth while. They are small, of course, yet I think many nurses do not go carefully enough into financial details to get a really sound notion of comparative values in salaries and income. The rates paid in private duty seem alluring, yet the sound economist estimates a salary *not* by what it is for a day or week or month, but by what it is in a *year*. Few nurses think as far ahead as this in money matters.

A nurse at private duty must keep her room, at about ten dollars a month, and must spend considerably more on clothes than one in hospital position. Then, she never knows how irregular her work will be.

The hospital nurse gets, in her board and laundry, at least the equivalent of twenty-five dollars a month, which other self-supporting women have to pay out of salaries. It sounds larger to say you have a salary of fifty or sixty dollars a month, yet the hospital nurse who gets twenty-five to thirty-five with no expenses is getting the same as the woman who has the larger sum and has to board and lodge herself.

Another important factor in the net income for a year is found in moving about as compared with remaining in one place for a length of time. Staying quietly in one place for a few years means saving money; moving about, changing positions, getting different kinds of outfits for new kinds of work,—all mean extra expenditure, and reduce the nurse's net balance. Some kinds of work which have attached to them very attractive salaries bring with them conditions, responsibilities, and duties which compel a large outlay of money in order to meet the necessities of the life. Thus, a number of circumstances need to be considered in taking up work, and it is a great pity that more women do not regard with favor the head-nurseship of a ward. The position is dignified, the work attractive, the opportunities for good are unlimited. The head nurse may reap confidence, love, and high esteem in her position; may take an important part in training others, and need not lose entirely her hold on the world outside. In the English hospitals one finds head nurses retaining their wards for years, and the atmosphere is charged with the motherly and home-making personality. The American nurse might well be less of a nomad and more of a home-maker.

EX-HOSPITAL NURSE.

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DEAR EDITOR: I would like to suggest that the different State societies keep in mind two practical points for their State laws.

First, the desirability of all adopting the same title, as the confusion may be easily imagined should each State adopt a different title for the trained and registered nurse.

Second, the avoidance of future trouble by arranging reciprocity clauses

which will provide that registration in one State is accepted in all the others, thus doing away with complications for the nurse who is registered in one State and goes to work in another.

L. L. Dock,

Trustee, N. Y. S. N. A.

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DEAR EDITOR: A little boy in this institution having the word "patient" to define wrote, "A patient is a person suffering from meekness and submission." I am very much interested in the JOURNAL and enjoy it thoroughly. Hoping it will continue its successful career, and thanking you for the work you are doing,

I am yours sincerely,

A SUBSCRIBER,

State School for Weak-minded Youth, Columbus, O.

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DEAR EDITOR: I fully corroborate Miss Strum's article in October JOURNAL OF NURSING. A graduate of a small school receives a superior *individual* training, which it is utterly impossible to give the nurse training in a large school. She comes in direct touch with the directress, who has an opportunity to weed out the inferior nurses, giving a superior class of nurses graduating from the small training-schools. The larger schools training a large number of nurses, the nurse very seldom—if ever—comes in direct touch with the directress. This gives ample opportunity for a slack, careless nurse to slide through the school. The increased number of small general hospitals in small towns during the past ten years, and the successful nurses these schools turn out each year, demonstrates most forcibly that the small general hospital is a decided success.

E. Z. FOELKER.

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[LETTERS to the Editor must be accompanied by the name in full and address of the writer, otherwise such communications cannot be recognized. The name need not appear in the JOURNAL unless so desired.—ED.]

